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GENERAL MISCELLANEOUS.

EUGENIO TANZI. *Cenni ed esperimenti sulla psicologia dell'udito. Rivista di Filosofia Scientifica.* December, 1891.

One-half of this article is a review of theories, physical, physiological, and psychological, on sensations of sound. The second half is an account of the author's experiments on the reaction-time for major and minor chords. The keys of a pianoforte, the reagent's key and the chronoscope were joined in one circuit. The results are shown in two tables, the one for simple reaction-time, the other for choice between reaction and no-reaction. Conclusion: The minor third has a "character of greater evidence" than the major, but is not always more quickly perceived. E. PACE.

SIEBECK, *Beiträge zur Entstehungs-Geschichte der neueren Psychologie.* Giessen, 1891. S. 34.

This includes three studies on the growth of psychology during the period between Aquinas and the Renaissance. The first is devoted to Eckhart, the other two to Buridan. As an advance upon his scholastic predecessor, E.'s chief importance lies in his treatment of the feeling side of mind. His recognition of an inmost soul-phase which blends subject and object, foreshadow and will in a higher unity is at once a departure from the old classification and a step towards the new. His mysticism asserts itself in the contest which he assigns to this unity, or "Finklein," viz., the knowledge of God and of His indwelling in man. Still, his conception of the "Gemüthsleben" is an unmistakable prelude of modern teaching, and his insertion of the "Minne" between thought and will suggests quite plainly the tripartite division of mental phenomena.

Buridan's labors are marked by independence of thought and a preference for empirical methods. These traits are shown especially in his psychology, which is generally under-rated or minimized to the fable of the ass—whereof there is not a word in his writings. His doctrine of free-will is, in its earlier stage, an echo of the traditional "libertas oppositionis," the power to choose between opposites for which the motives are equally strong. But this appears later on simply as a means of attaining ethical freedom—the "libertas finalis ordinationis." To effect the transition, Buridan narrows freedom to a power of suspending judgment of the intellect upon its presentations, until, by further investigation, that real good be discovered, which claims the assent of the will.

More interesting for modern psychology are the "beginnings of a psychical mechanics" discernible in B. His attempt at a simpler classification of sense perceptions, based on genetic principles, breaks ground for the Associationists. In his answer to the question whether out of several simultaneous presentations each is as clearly perceived as though it appeared singly in consciousness, he takes into account the intensity and contrast of such presentations and the direction of the attention.

The "Relativity of Sensations" is one of his principles. Weber would have welcomed B.'s observation that not every slight increment of stimulus produces a corresponding increase of sensation; and Goethe might have found the germ of his color-theory in Buridan's treatment of light and shade. Add to this his careful analysis of feelings pleasurable and unpleasurable, and of their interaction under varying intensity, and it will be clear that B., whatever effect he may have had on his contemporaries, was not far from the line of thought which psychology follows to-day.